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the Nation

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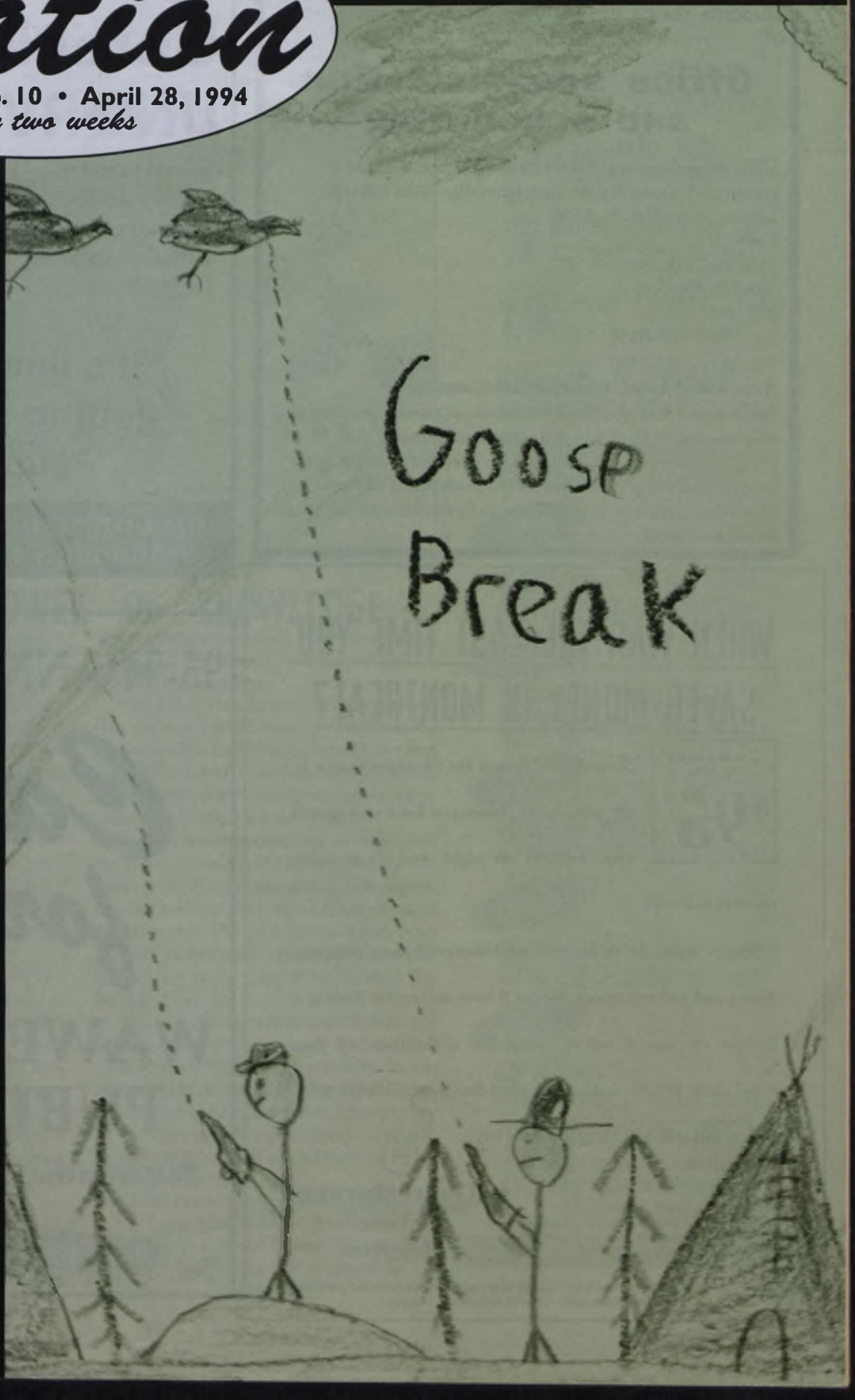

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PHOTO BY PIERRE LEMAY

SHARING THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE

Well, it's the 10th issue of *The Nation*. I must admit that each issue has a special meaning for me.

Cree political, social and business structures have undergone drastic changes in the last 20 years. In some cases these structures didn't even exist then. To me that means we have a lot work to do in terms of catching up and understanding them as they are today.

Most of the information I had at a community level was through rumour and the Band Council meetings. The rumours in a lot of cases were distorted, exaggerated and/or totally off the mark.

A lot of it made me feel helpless to change things I felt were wrong, and sometimes I acted on wrong information, which led to problems.

Band Council meetings in some cases have a hard time getting a quorum because of a lack of knowledge, feelings of a lack of true participation or apathy. Many people comment on this outside of the meetings without realizing it is in their power to question or affect the changes they wish.

I know the Band Councils are trying to alleviate this problem and hopefully when one comes up with some successful solutions, you'll read about it in *The Nation*. In this way we can share in the benefits.

I hope that *The Nation* is informative and entertaining. It is still being defined both by us at the office and by you. Remember that *The Nation* is your newspaper; we have and continue to ask for your participation in that definition of what we will become.

I know some people are worried that the governments and Hydro-Quebec are reading *The Nation* and getting sensitive information about the Crees. Let me put your minds to rest. The governments and even Hydro-Quebec have a better idea of what's happening in the Cree territory than the average Cree does.

This fear does not reflect the traditional openness of the Cree people. We must all have access to knowledge and information that will help us make the judgements, resolutions and to carry out the tasks necessary for the daily activities of a nation—and also to plan for the future of that nation.

Knowledge is power.

I wish to see that power shared by all members of the Cree Nation, not just a few. I think that we must use that power responsibly.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

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Cover drawing by Terry Dixon, a student at Waswanipi's W.J. Happyjack Memorial School

APRIL 28, 1994

PHOTO BY PIERRE LEMAY

Is anybody listening?

Different segments of the "dominant" culture are now starting to feel and realize what native people have been saying for generations. I don't want to say, "Told you so," but we told you so.

People are starting to feel the effects of near-sighted and foolish "mismanagement" of the environment. Look at Newfoundland with its fishery or lack thereof, people in the Abitibi and Gaspe regions with the lack of timber, Ontario with the polluted Great Lakes and acid rain, B.C. with the clearcutting issue and fish wars with the Americans.

These regions are starting to cry out for help. They are feeling lost. They are feeling a sense of loss because they know what they lost or are losing. Unfortunately they only find out after it's too late. The fish stocks will come back, the trees will come back, the water will cleanse itself, but you must give them a chance.

After so many years of taking the earth and its resources for granted, we are only now starting to pay for negligence, the negligence of allowing short-sighted and money-hungry individuals and corporations to "manage" the earth. Look at what's happening around us. We now have to pay for drinking water. "Green space" is now at a premium. Everybody is now fighting over it. Fishermen are now trying to catch all the fish they can so the others don't get them. Forests are being cut down so the others don't get them.

There is a catch-22 we have to get out of. One side says they have to cut to feed their children. Then the other side says if it's cut they can't feed their children. Both sides have to feed their children. But is cutting and catching everything now the right way to feed our children? What will we leave for our grandchildren?

The people in the outlying regions of the "dominant" culture are now joining the chorus of concerned people who want to save what's left. The native people of different nations have been voicing concerns about the environment for a long time now to no avail. Nobody seemed to be listening. With these new voices sounding the alarm, will anybody listen?

BY ERNEST WEBB

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PHOTO BY ERNEST WEBB

MAKIVIK SIGNS DEAL ON GREAT WHALE

Makivik Corporation has agreed not to delay the Great Whale River Project in exchange for $100 million in compensation, promises of contracts for Inuit entrepreneurs and a training centre.

"If Great Whale is done properly, this project could have positive impacts, namely on job creation, training, contracts with Inuit firms and the establishment of joint ventures," said Makivik President Simeonie Nalukturuk at a joint press conference on April 14 given by the Inuit administrative body and Hydro-Quebec.

Zebedee Nungak, first Vice-President of Makivik, said the Inuit entered the agreement for "pragmatic" reasons because they couldn't stop the Great Whale project. "Our people have done a lot of deep thinking to stop it [the project]. How can our people mitigate the impacts on our geography and people, and how can we benefit? We're taking a very pragmatic approach."

Hydro-Quebec President Armand Couture insisted that the utility has the legal power to go ahead with the Great Whale project without any agreements with the Inuit and Crees, once ongoing environmental-assessment hearings are over. "I think we have the necessary legal framework to proceed with the project."

The payments will be spread out over a 50-year period. An amount of $30 million in current dollars will be paid as soon as Hydro-Quebec decides to proceed with construction of the Great Whale project. An additional $21 million will be paid over the seven-year construction period. After that, the Inuit will get $12 million more per year for 42 years. All that adds up to $555 million. But due to inflation and depreciation, it means about $102 million in today's dollars if Hydro-Quebec gets its construction license in 1997 as planned.

Nalukturuk emphasized that the deal signed on April 14 is only an agreement-in-principle, and that a final agreement will be signed within 18 months.

"Let me state clearly that in signing this agreement, we are in no way giving up our right to decide whether we are for or against this project," he said, adding that Inuit participation in environmental hearings will continue.

"The money will help us assess the negative impacts of the project so we can make a final decision after the environmental-assessment hearings."

But Nalukturuk and Nungak seemed confused when a journalist at the press conference asked how the money will help in making this decision if it will only be given out after construction starts.

Nungak asked the journalist to repeat his question, and when he did they didn't answer directly, saying only that Makivik is involved in talks with Hydro-Quebec.

BY ALEX ROSLIN

MIXED REACTIONS TO HYDRO DEAL

Inuit mayors in two of the communities most affected by the Great Whale River Project had mixed reactions to Makivik's April 14 agreement-in-principle with Hydro-Quebec.

Umiujaq Mayor Ernest Tumic said he supports the deal. "We wouldn't have signed if we thought it was a bad deal."

But he said if the Inuit had a choice, they would like to see the Great Whale project just go away. "I think that most, maybe 90 per cent of the people in the affected communities would rather see the hydro-project not get underway. But there are those who have an interest, maybe business-wise, to have this project."

He said the Inuit feel they can't stop the project. "Don't forget back in 1975, Hydro went ahead without consulting us. This time, we don't want to be caught off-guard so we started to negotiate."

The agreement-in-principle, signed on Hydro-Quebec's 50th birthday, opens the door to negotiations on a final agreement that must be signed within 18 months.

Tumic wants some changes before this deal is signed. "With this agreement-in-principle, I think we nailed down a bottom-line on what we want. I think we have a chance to get more out of the final agreement. If there isn't [more], there's no deal."

Tumic said the Great Whale project will hit his community hard. "If they go ahead with it, it will have a tremendous impact on us socially and environmentally. Most of the people depend on animals to feed their people. When the mother river is diverted, the streams will start drying out. There will be no more fish. It will also affect other wildlife."

Kuujjuarapik Mayor Anthony Ittoshat would not comment on the deal, beyond saying: "It's not a perfect agreement but we can live with it. If this is going ahead, we want to get something out of it." Asked whether Hydro-Quebec has the right to build Great Whale without Inuit consent, he said: "They didn't have the right but they had the power to do it."

—Alex Roslin

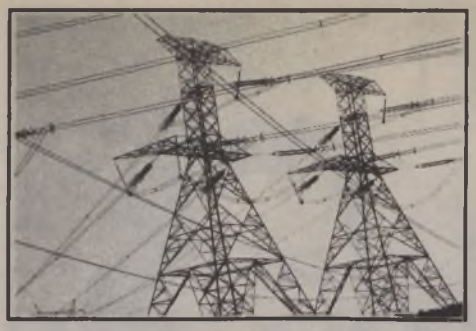
Superman says just say no

Letter to the Editor:

[The following letter was sent to New York power utility Consolidated Edison on April 11 by Christopher Reeve, who played Superman in the movies and is also the co-president of The Creative Coalition, an organization of socially concerned actors.]

The Creative Coalition is writing this to join the chorus of knowledgeable, responsible voices urging you to NOT sign an agreement with Hydro-Quebec to supply energy to NY.

As you are well aware, such a purchase would supply unnecessary energy to our area; Con Edison has itself projected that it will have substantial capacity surpluses through at least 2012. Adding to such a surplus would almost certainly lead to a drastic drop in aggressive pursuit of energy efficiency programs. In addition, imported power from Quebec would provide only negligible employment and tax revenues for New York State. By contrast, in-state options such as energy efficiency and renewables could provide a powerful stimulus for the state's economy.



In addition, if you were to purchase power from Hydro-Quebec, there would be devastating environmental consequences. The release of greenhouse gases, the disruption of migratory bird patterns in North America, and the spread of organic mercury into the food chain are just some of the destructive effects that would occur if Con Edison supported Hydro-Quebec's disastrous current intentions to flood one of North America's largest remaining wilderness areas.

Since you are aware of the alarming dangers of the proposed Hydro-Quebec contract, and the needlessness of entering such an agreement, you will understand how strongly we feel about this issue. The Creative Coalition has, as you know, been noteably successful in bringing to wide attention pressing issues that affect us as New Yorkers. We would much rather find ourselves publicly congratulating Con Edison on its wise refusal to sign a contract with Hydro-Quebec, than to find ourselves forced to emphasize strongly and clearly, with all the media access at our disposal, what a terrible mistake your company had made.

We urge you, in the strongest terms, to make the only decision you can reasonably make for our future. Reject Hydro-Quebec as a business partner.

Christopher Reeve
Blair Brown
Co-Presidents,
The Creative Coalition

Cree vitality

Letter to the Editor:

In the name of Hydro-Quebec, permit me to congratulate your journal; it is a very good example of vitality of the Cree people of Quebec.

Please accept, Monsieur Nicholls, the expression of my best sentiments.

Yves Gaulin
Chief of Aboriginal Service
Hydro-Quebec

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REPLACE BROUILLARD: BOARD MEMBERS

Richard Brouillard should be replaced as controller of the Board of Compensation because of his role in the Servinor-funds affair, say CRA representatives to the board.

Brouillard is one of the most influential business consultants working for the Crees. Besides his position as controller, he is also a financial advisor and consultant to Servinor Food Wholesaler Inc.

Brouillard recently walked into controversy when he approved Servinor's withdrawal of $8.9 million from funds managed by the Board of Compensation without getting permission from members of the board. The board discussed the money withdrawal at a heated meeting in Val d'Or at the end of March.

After this meeting, the three Cree Regional Authority representatives to the Board of Compensation drafted a strongly-worded letter asking for the removal of Brouillard from his job as controller.

The letter said Brouillard is in a position of conflict-of-interest.

"This dual role of advising the Board of Compensation as to how best to safeguard Cree Heritage Funds and at the same time be a paid business consultant to one of the companies that now has placed a tremendous amount of Cree funds at risk needs to be reviewed," says the letter signed by Bill Namagoose, Matthew Swallow and Eddy Diamond.

"These functions must be segregated and we strongly recommend that a new controller be retained by the Board of Compensation," says the four-page letter, dated March 29 and sent to all Cree chiefs, board members and the Grand Council of the Crees. A copy was obtained by *The Nation*.

Brouillard and Board of Compensation chair Rod Pachano couldn't be reached for comment. The letter will be discussed at a meeting of the board's management committee on April 28 in Ouje-Bougoumou.

The letter describes Servinor's cash-withdrawal as "without question an abuse and a violation of all professional business norms."

It faults the Cree-owned food wholesaler for assuming that the Board of Compensation would bail out its financial losses. "The fact that Servinor Inc. has not been able to secure financing from a banking institution after 11 months but began operations anyway is of great concern. This is a total violation of all business practices and clearly demonstrates that it was taken for granted that the Board would bail out any losses," says the letter.

"The Cree Board of Compensation members cannot expect guaranteed profits from the business ventures that we are undertaking. We however need a certain level of comfort before the Board of Compensation members can put Cree Funds at risk in a business venture. This level of comfort can only be derived from the advice and opinions we receive from Chief Executive Officers of the companies and the advice and reports we receive as shareholders of the companies from the controller."

BY NATION STAFF

MY FUNDS ARE LOW

Funds have run out for the Great Whale Environmental Assessment Review Office. As of March 31, Crees have been picking up the $40,000-a-month tab to keep the office open to work on the Cree case in the environmental-impact hearings into the Great Whale River Project.

Ottawa and Quebec have been stalling for months on resolving the issue, even though the developer should be paying for intervenor funding in the hearings, according to Bill Namagoose, executive director for the Grand Council. He says the government should go one step further and fund other intervenors at the hearings, like environmentalists or unions.

Namagoose said Hydro-Quebec hasn't even returned his calls regarding the funds. "They're too busy spin-doctoring," he said, a reference to Hydro's recent deal with Makivik Corporation. Namagoose said that deal further puts the hearings into jeopardy. "Principals in three of the five committees [at the hearings] have signed an agreement saying they won't modify the project. They [Makivik] made an agreement without knowing what the impacts [of Great Whale] will be on them. They've removed the authority of the committees."

—Alex Roslin

LICENSED TO FISH

Crees may soon be asked to get a license to fish in coastal areas.

The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans has been signalling that Cree communities may have to get communal fishing licenses as part of a new aboriginal fisheries policy. The first Cree told to get a license is George Lameboy, a commercial and sports outfitter in Chisasibi.

"They're sort of letting the rumour spread that eventually Crees will have to have a communal license, with a warden and fishing quotas," says Rene Dion, a biologist with the Cree Regional Authority. "It's totally against the spirit of community fishing and the right to go fishing whenever you want."

Dion said federal officials may start demanding the licenses because the coastal waters of James Bay and Hudson Bay fall under federal jurisdiction.

BRIEFS CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

"The only reason for the license is that it's a different territory. But as far as the Crees are concerned, wherever they can go with their boat is their territory. It's quite clear in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement that Crees can go out and harvest fish whenever they want."

The CRA has asked fisheries officials to provide clarification about the new federal policy, but hasn't received word back. "Right now it's all vague," Dion said. A fisheries spokeswoman was unable to provide details on the policy before we went to print.

—Alex Roslin

New sewers for Chisasibi

Chisasibi will soon have a new sewer system. After years of foot-dragging by Ottawa and Quebec, both levels of government finally approved to spend $6 million on sewers in mid-April. Construction will start this summer.

The new system will hook up 120 houses, or about one in five houses in the community. The rest of the homes will continue to use separate septic tanks until the government releases more funds. That may take years. The separate septic tanks have run into a lot of problems because the community is on land where there are high underground water levels. This prevents water in the septic tanks from being absorbed into the ground.

One band official said it's about time the government is doing something. "We've been crying ever since we signed the James Bay Agreement that we shouldn't pay for this out of our heritage funds. It says in the Agreement that the government should provide the same services as before, which we don't think the government has done."

—Nation staff

Sioui to run

Konrad Sioui has announced he will run for the leadership of the Assembly of First Nations next July 6.

Sioui, the former Grand Chief of the Huron-Wendat Nation, is the first francophone from Quebec to run for the job. "Just the fact of being able to speak French will make a big difference and it will be important," Sioui told *La Presse*. "We can't ignore what will happen in Quebec, the possibility of a referendum. It's necessary that someone be there who is able to understand Quebec politics and the challenges here."

Also running are Mike Mitchell, former Chief of the Canadian part of Akwesasne, Bill Tooshkenig of Walpole Island, Ont., and Delia Opekokew, a Cree lawyer from Saskatchewan. The current National Chief of the AFN, Ovide Mercredi, hasn't yet announced if he will run again. Kahnawake Chief Joe Norton was rumoured to be a possible candidate, but he now says he won't run. Waskaganish Chief Billy Diamond is also rumoured to be a possible candidate.

In an interview about the AFN election, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come said the AFN must be more willing to come to the defense of the First Nations in Quebec. "There is a need for a national organization to be sensitive to the volatile situation in Quebec," he said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Seals as far as you can see, say residents of Wemindji

Spring-time brings more than just geese to Wemindji.

It also brings seals.

Lots of seals.

"They're everywhere," exclaimed one Wemindji resident, "just laying out in the sun—as far as you can see, on every iceberg!"

With plenty to eat and no predators except for a handful of polar bears, the furry little creatures are multiplying quickly in coastal areas off Wemindji and Chisasibi, and as far south as Eastmain.

"They're everywhere, just laying out in the sun"

At this time of year, you can see 20 or 30 off the Wemindji coast with just the naked eye.

That poses a problem for the Cree coastal fishery.

Wemindji residents have increasingly turned to fishing in coastal areas due to fears of mercury poisoning of inland fish.

The Wemindji band council has detailed records of coastal fish stocks because it has run a summer fishing program for five years that provides fish to the elderly and others who are unable to fish.

Band officials report a steady decrease in fish stocks, and tallymen say it's because of the growing number of seals.

No one is completely certain why seal numbers are increasing, or how serious the deterioration of fish stocks is.

The band plans to seek expert advice from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans to evaluate the problem before it starts looking at various solutions.

Wemindji also hopes to get funds to do an aerial survey of the seal population in conjunction with Eastmain and Chisasibi.

This plan received support from the local Cree Trappers' Association.

"I think we should do research," said a CTA official in Wemindji.

"We don't know the whole story yet."

—Alex Roslin

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

"Right now, they're silent just like Canada is silent. They need to speak out. Who else will do it?"

—Nation staff

MILTON FOUND GUILTY

Milton Born With A Tooth has been found guilty of five weapons charges related to a protest against Alberta's Oldman River mega-hydroproject in 1990.

Milton was a member of a group called the Lonefighter Society that was trying to dig a channel to divert the Oldman River away from the dam. The Oldman River is sacred to the Peigan Nation. When RCMP officers invaded the Lonefighters' camp, Milton fired two warning shots into the air and was arrested.

Milton was found guilty on March 15 by a jury with only one native member. When the jury was polled for its verdict, the lone native juror stood up, threw her glasses across the room and burst out into tears saying, "You don't understand." The judge ordered the jury sequestered until they reached a consensus.

The Oldman River and the nearby wildlife and traditional sites are the foundation of Peigan culture. In March 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada ordered an environmental assessment of the dam, but the province continued work anyway. The Lonefighter Society went to work to protest the continued construction with support from the chief, band council and Peigan Elders.

The Peigans say that the Alberta government has yet to implement any of the recommendations of the review, including making a negotiated settlement with the Peigans.

Milton faces a maximum sentence of 42 years. He wants to appeal the verdict, but due to new rules he needs to put up $10,000 to mount an appeal. He is asking for donations. Cheques can be made payable to: Lorna Born With A Tooth, 204 Beddington Circle N.E., Calgary, AB, T3K 2H5. Fax: (403) 274-2247.

—Nation staff

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NATIVES MORE DISABLED

The disability rate for aboriginal peoples is more than double that of other Canadians, and in the 15-to-24 age group it's three times higher, says Statistics Canada.

The statistics, based on a 1991 national aboriginal survey, show that 31 per cent of First Nations peoples reported some level of disability, compared to 15 per cent of Canadians. Statistics Canada said the problem is linked to poorer living conditions.

The 1991 survey found that native households were in poorer shape but 50 per cent were more crowded than homes of other Canadians. Twenty per cent of native homes needed major repairs, compared with a Canadian average of 8 per cent.

The Assembly of First Nations says the rate is much higher, pointing to a 1993 federal Indian Affairs report that found 42 per cent of native homes outside the Northwest Territories failed to meet basic standards.

The disability rate for the Inuit is 29 per cent. Non-Inuit natives on reserves had a 33-per-cent rate of disability.

But among the Inuit, hearing disabilities were highest, with a rate almost twice Canada's adult population. Forty-four per cent of Inuit disabilities were related to hearing.

Inuit children have a high rate of chronic otitis media, a middle-ear disease. Adding to the problem is noise pollution from the earlier use of noisy snowmobiles, high-velocity rifles and loud machinery. Doctors said in one news report that the noise conditions and infection rates have improved in recent years.

—Nation staff

"DAM HYDRO-QUEBEC"

Hydro-Quebec got a nice present on its 50th birthday. Around the world, Hydro-Quebec offices and Canadian embassies were picketed by noisy demonstrators protesting its hydro-projects.

The demonstrations took place in New York, Washington, Boston, Chicago, London and Australia on the utility's 50th birthday on April 14. At Canada's embassy in Washington, environmentalists attached 70 signs to the walls and windows saying, "Dam Hydro-Quebec."

Embassy spokesman George Rioux told Canadian Press that his personnel were ready "to explain the very severe process of environmental evaluation to assure that no construction will take place before the end of this process. Unfortunately, no one came."

—Nation staff

GOOSE BREAK SPECIAL

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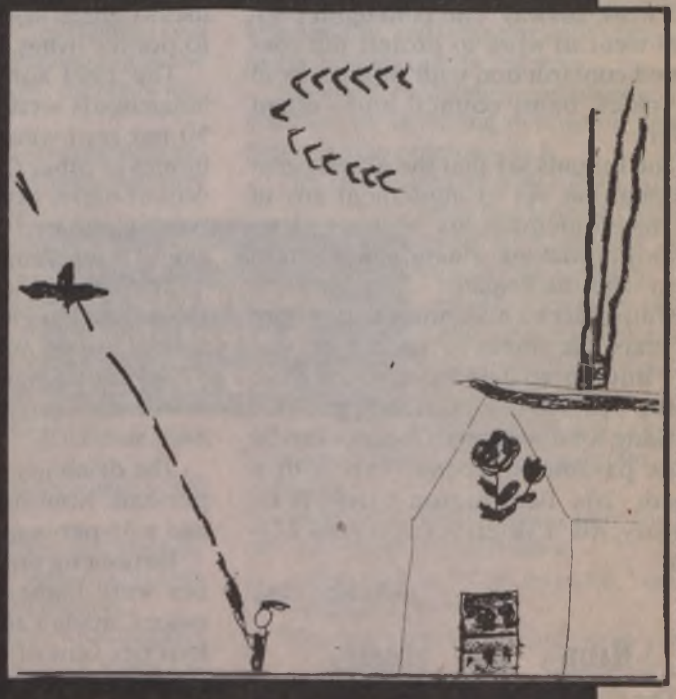
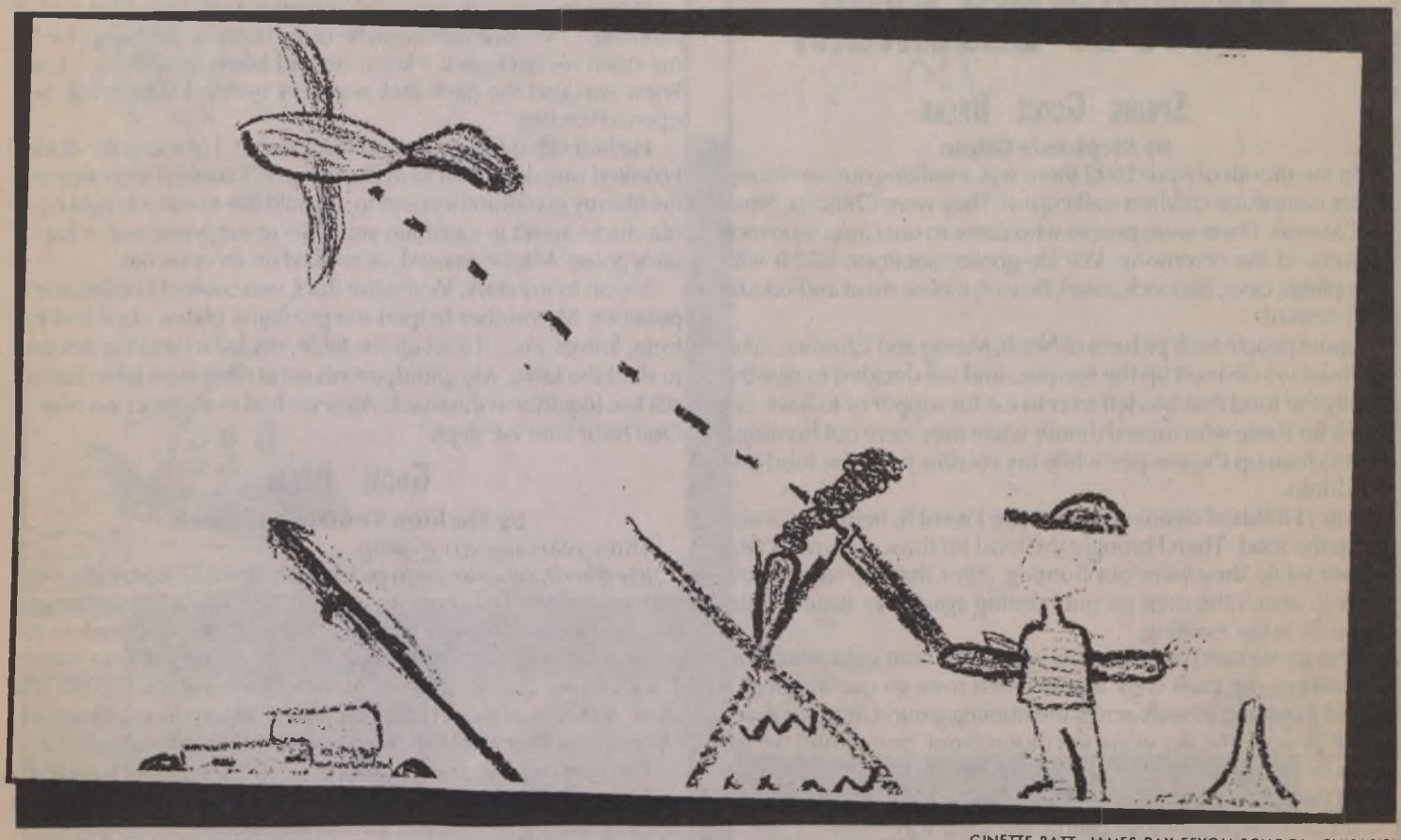
JODI COOPER, W.I. HAPPYJACK MEMORIAL, WASWANIPI



KATHLEEN SHECAPIO, ECOLE MEMORIAL VOYAGEUR, MISTISSINI

Stories from Badabin Eeyou School in Whapmagoostui



GINETTE RATT, JAMES BAY EEYOU SCHOOL, CHISASIBI

My Goose Break

by Charlie Dick

When we go camping my grandfather is gonna teach me everything what man does in camp, and how to set up a fishing net, and how to make wood decoys, and how to make traps, and how to kill a goose and everything that he knows.

My Goose break Story

by Christine Kawapit

I will go camping with my grandma Suzanne Kawapit. She is going to live with us at the camp because she likes living with us and she always teaches me how to make fishing nets and how to go get wood on my own and to go with my mother to get beaver and how to make bannock. I like my grandma. She's really kind to us. She told me the stories of my grandpa John. I always miss him whenever my grandma talks about him. He was my favourite grandpa and I will live with my grandma Suzanne. My family and I will always remember the things she taught us.

Thank you to all teachers and students who took the time to send in their work.

My Goose Break

by Andrea Mamiamscum

When we go camping, my grandmother will teach me everything what she did in the old times. I'll cook caribou and after I'll help my grandmother. She will tell me to put spruce boughs on the ground. Then after I finish everything my grandmother or my grandfather, they'll speak to me or they'll tell me what they did in the old times. Then after that if my grandfather or my uncles and my father if they kill some geese, I'll pluck them and my grandmother will help me to cook or pluck the geese. And I will get water if we don't have any water. And after that I'll look for spruce boughs. And after I pluck some geese and cook the goose, I'll eat the goose. My grandmother will teach me how to put the spruce boughs on the ground.

My Goose Break Story

by Mario Rupert

When we go to our goose break camp, I'm going to go hunting with my brother and my father and my father will say help me place the goose decoys in the water. Then geese will come and we will shoot them. And we take them home and mom will pluck them. Then she will cook them and we will eat, and my brother and I will go bird hunting and if we kill some birds, we will give them to our grandmother and she will cook them. And when it's 10 o'clock, we will go to sleep and in the morning if it's cold I will not go with him. And I will just chop some wood for the fire and get spruce boughs for our tipi.

Stories from students in Grade 6 at the Wabannutao Eyou School of Eastmain

Spring Goose Break

by Stephanie Gilpin

In the month of April 1992 there was a walking out ceremony. There were three children walking out. They were Christina, Noah and Mason. There were people who came to our camp who took pictures of the ceremony. We ate goose, potatoes, rabbit with dumplings, cake, bannock, salad, beaver, moose meat and boudin with custard.

Some people took pictures of Noah, Mason and Christina. After the feast we cleaned up the tee-pee, and we decided to give the family the food that was left over to eat for supper or to have as a snack for those who missed dinner while they were out hunting. I got to clean up the tee-pee while my cousins fixed the food and the drinks.

After I finished cleaning the tee-pee I went to help my cousins fix up the food. Then I brought the food for those who didn't eat dinner while they were out hunting. After that we went to the dock to watch the men go out hunting again. We watched the geese fly in the evening.

Our goose camp is just across where the men go out hunting. Sometimes the men walk across when they go out hunting. It takes 15 minutes to walk across the hunting ground. It's nice to see geese fly up in the sky while the moon is out. Sometimes we get up early and watch the men go out hunting and after hunting they bring their geese and we pluck them.

It's best for people to do things the Cree way.

Spring Goose Break

by Sophia Cheezo, Grade 6

During our last goose break I went with my grandparents, plus my family of course.

When my father leaves in the mornings I say, "Be good at your shooting." Then one afternoon he came home to the camp. He let me open his pack sack. I knew he had killed something. How I knew was that the pack sack was very heavy. I almost fell. So I opened the bag.

He had killed five geese and three ducks. I plucked the ducks. I cooked one of the ducks in the tee-pee. I cooked it on an open fire like my grandmother used to. I would like to eat one right now, but ducks aren't in Eastmain yet. I like to eat geese too! A big fat juicy goose. Maybe roasted, or cooked on an open fire.

So, on to my story. When the duck was cooked I boiled some potatoes. My mother helped me put some plates, cups and the forks, knives, etc... To set up the table, my father was the first one to sit at the table. My grandparents sat at their own table but we still live together in the shack. After we had our supper we rested. One hour later we slept.

Goose Break

by Sheldon Tomatuk, Grade 6

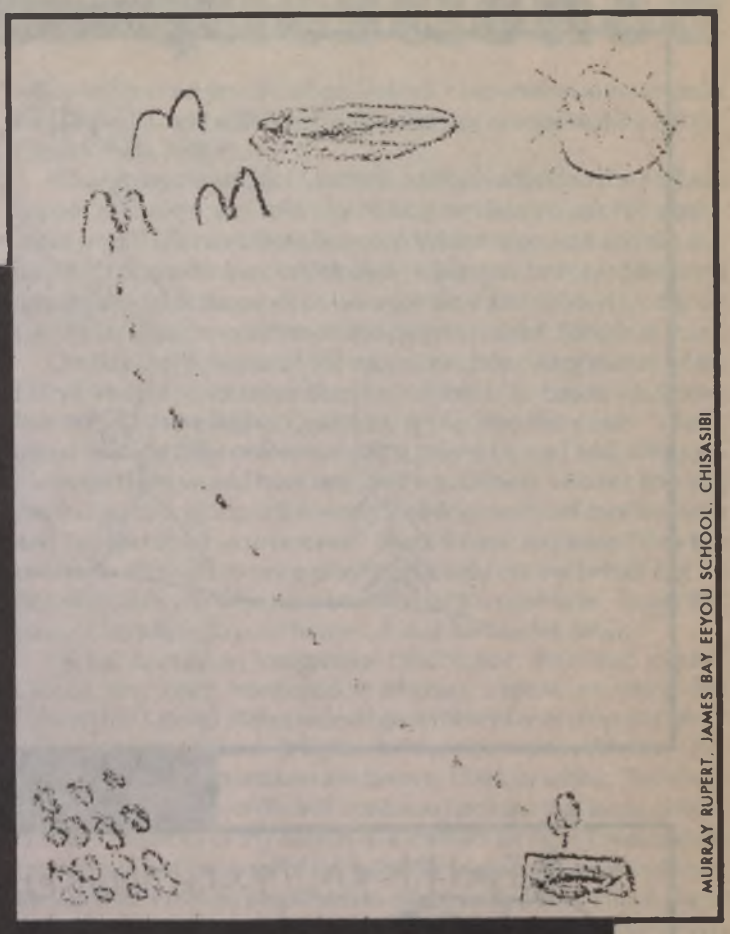
Three years ago at our camp...

My grandmother loved to pick berries alone. One day she went with my sisters. The snow was so soft. She saw a fallen tree and she tried to walk along it but she fell down. She was stuck in the snow. My sisters didn't know what to do. Then they ran home. They told my mother that our grandmother was stuck in the soft snow. So my mother and father went and helped my grandmother. My grandmother was laughing. She couldn't stop laughing.

The next day she went to pick berries but she would have to go with my mother. She will always remember when she fell down from a low tree and got stuck in the soft snow.

PAULINE TRAPPER, ECOLE VOYAGEUR MEMORIAL, MISTISSINI

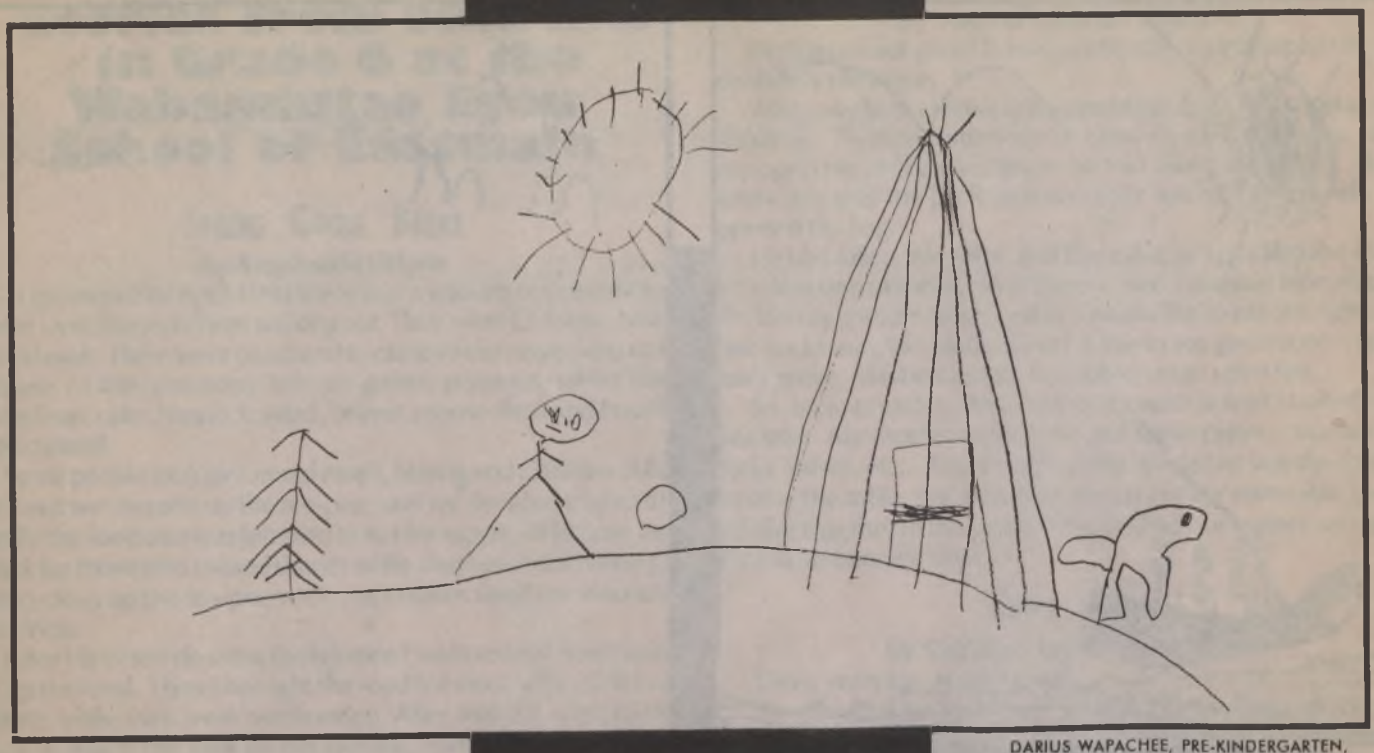
JOCELYNE COX, JAMES BAY EEYOU SCHOOL, CHISASIBI



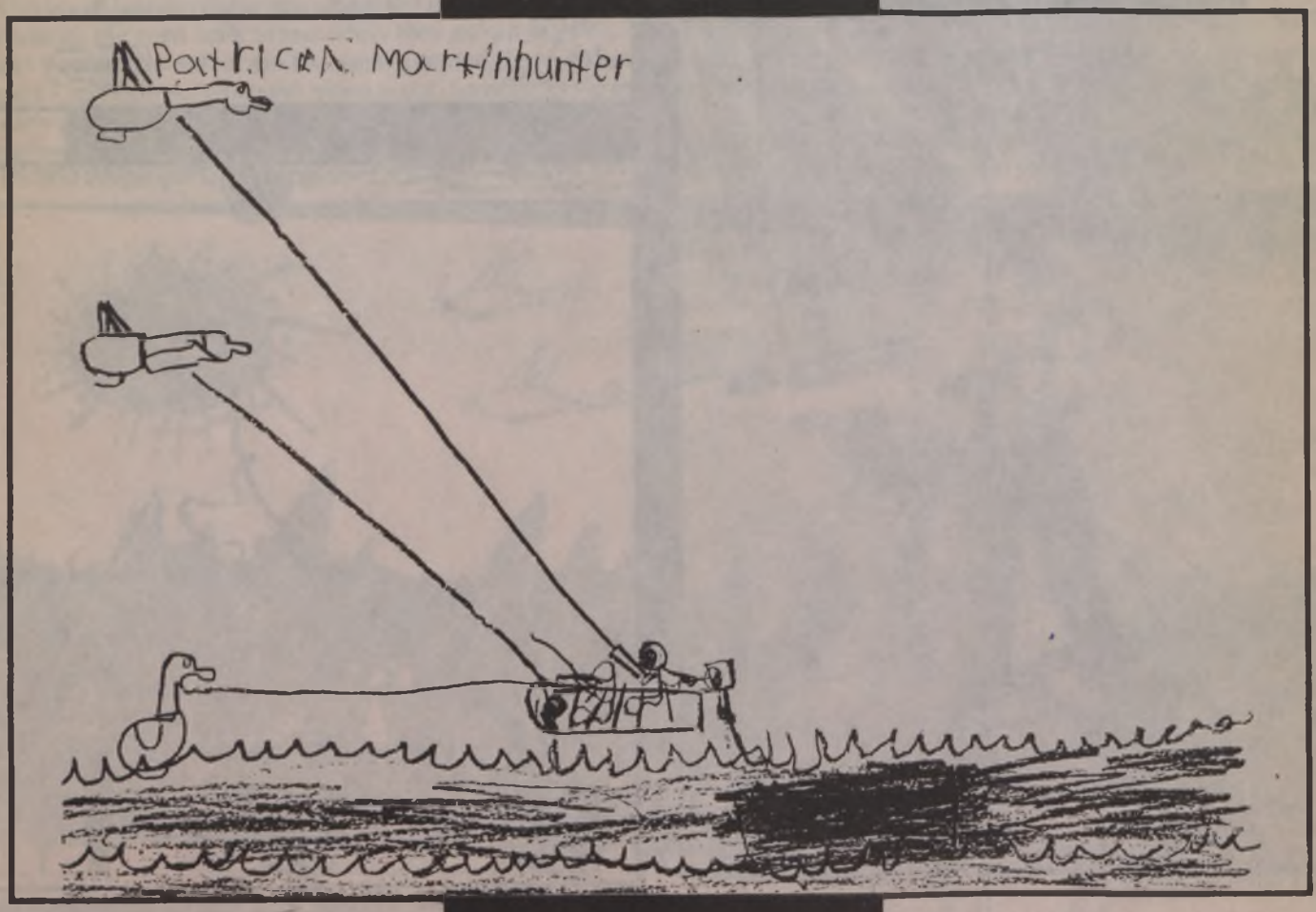
MURRAY RUPERT, JAMES BAY EEYOU SCHOOL, CHISASIBI

PHOTO BY NEIL DIAMOND

JOSEPH MATTAWASHISH, ECOLE MEMORIAL VOYAGEUR, MISTISSINI



DARIUS WAPACHEE, PRE-KINDERGARTEN,
LUKE METTAWESKUM SCHOOL, NEMASKA



PATRICK MARTINHUNTER, GRADE ONE, JAMES BAY EEYOU SCHOOL, CHISASIBI

WATER

Cliche's agenda questioned

BY WILL NICHOLLS

Native peoples from around the world, developers and government officials met in Montreal April 13 to 15 to discuss water-related development and its impacts on indigenous peoples.

The list of speakers was impressive—Christos Sirros, Quebec's Native Affairs Minister, Andre Laporte, Vice-President of Indian and Inuit Affairs for Hydro-Quebec, Simeonie Nalukturuk, President of Makivik, Kenneth B. Young of the Manitoba Assembly of First Nations, Richard Le Hir of the Manufacturers' Association of Quebec, Clarence Skye from the United Sioux Nation, Zehra Aydin from the United Nations, among many others.

Noteably absent was the Grand Council of the Crees. Cree sources said this was because the relationship between the Crees and David Cliche, the organizer of the conference, had deteriorated.

Cliche, who is also the Parti Quebecois's official liaison with First Nations in Quebec, recently referred to some Crees as "jet-setters" at a Massachusetts conference. Cliche was also seen as playing both sides of the fence. In the United States, Cliche defends the hydro-dams and Quebec's interests, but in Quebec he assumes a neutral position. He also accepted a contract from Hydro-Quebec to act as a liaison with U.S. environmentalists, and wasn't upfront about this contract with Crees. This was another factor in their decision.

Although the Cree leadership wasn't present, one Cree was. Romeo Saganash facilitated the first discussion panel. His style was interesting. At one point Christos Sirros said the land in the North belongs to no one and its resources belong to no one. Romeo responded by saying, "If that's so, why do you act like it belongs to you?" That was day one.

Day two brought a shock to many indigenous people when Makivik Corporation announced it had signed a deal with Hydro-Quebec for compensation on the Great Whale Project.

Whapmagoostui Chief Matthew Mukash attended the Makivik supper that night and told *The Nation* he didn't think the agreement would affect relations between Whapmagoostui and Kuujjuarapik. "I don't think so. I think there is going to be more bitterness among the Inuit themselves because they are divided on the issue. As far as we're concerned the project is dead. Simple as that."

On day three, some of the nice speeches disappeared when Daryll Wright, executive director of the U.S.-based Mui Sose Intertribal Water Rights Coalition, spoke into the mike: "I have asked twice at this conference that a prayer be said and, although it was said they would have one, that was denied. I do not know of any indigenous group in the world that does not hold mother earth and her lifeblood in reverence. Twice I have requested that the elders be allowed to say a prayer, not only on my behalf but on behalf of all of you who have travelled far to come here. To ask that you return safely to your homes. Twice he was let down.

"If this is truly an indigenous conference, then that request should have been honoured at all costs. I spent my whole life fighting the United States federal government and corporations. I will continue to take that fight wherever I need to. Whether the heads of those corporations are brown, black or white. The struggle to keep my way of life will continue because that is my obligation as a member of my nation, as a traditional man. I was also on the agenda but because of my position I was once again cut from the agenda. I feel an emptiness in my heart because I have many things to say and when I came here my thoughts were centered around meeting people of colour from all over the world.

"The underlying theme of this conference is the promotion of development at the cost of the ways of life of indigenous peoples that they impact. The reason I asked George of the Cheslatta Nation to offer a prayer is that he carries on his shoulders a fight against another project in British Columbia. In 1952, he was forced to move from his place and many promises were made to those people. None of those promises were kept. In 1994, they are being forced again to be displaced with many more promises being made.

"Prior to removal, there were 132 members in that band. Only 78 remain. I think it is very important that he be allowed a prayer but also that the Cheslatta t'en Carrier Nation be allowed the opportunity to have their say at this conference. Because regardless of whether you call cooperation a confrontation, regardless of whether you claim the people are better off, there are many studies that show is a very false statement.

"You must understand and learn because history repeats itself, as in the case of the Cheslatta people, and I think these people of colour who have travelled many miles to come here have been misled. Because they wish to use your colour to add credence to the position of pro-development at the cost of our lives and the destruction of our homelands. And with this, my last statement, I would like to pass the mike to George to come up and offer a prayer and I will not be denied this time."

Later, a native from South America came up and said he had understood that his Cree bothers would be participating in the conference, and felt he had come under false pretexts.

David Cliche, the main organizer of the conference, felt it was a success.

> "I think these people of colour who have travelled many miles to come here have been misled. Because they wish to use your colour to add credence to the position of pro-development."
> —*Daryll Wright*

MORE CONFERENCE COVERAGE:

p. 16...Crees take on Manitoba Hydro
p. 17...Alcan comes back to haunt the Cheslatta
p. 18..."Water is my life struggle"
p. 26...News from the Sami Nation

Strong on the other side of the bay

The Crees and Inuit have the James Bay Agreement. On the other side of the bay, five Native Bands located on the Churchill and Nelson River systems have the Northern Flood Agreement.

The Flood Agreement was signed by the federal government, the provincial government of Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro and the five reserves in December 1977.

Kenneth B. Strong remembers two years before that signing when he watched the signing of the James Bay Agreement and the strong emotions that were felt by the Crees who had sought a permanent injunction.

He knows the same feelings were felt by his people two years later. The native peoples living in the areas affected by the Lake Winnipeg-Churchill Falls Diversion Project in northern Manitoba experienced major negative impacts. The project resulted in radical changes in water levels because of the dams. Other noticeable effects included a drop in the number of fish caught in affected lakes, and in some lakes, fish died out completely.

The fluctuating water levels are responsible for an increase in the amount of debris floating around. This has resulted in considerable damage to boats, motors and nets. When water levels drop, this creates new unseen shoals. Mud flats and reedy swamps also add to the dangers of navigation. Water levels that drop in the wintertime create air pockets and slush ice, making winter travel difficult. As in the Cree territory, hunting and trapping have been greatly affected.

Strong is a Cree from the Split Lake Band, one of the five Bands that signed the agreement. He now works for the Manitoba Assembly of First Nations. Today he is seeing an attempt by the governments to renegotiate the Northern Flood Agreement as if it were just a contract.

But the Bands don't want to reopen the agreement. Instead, they want the federal government to live up to its obligations under the agreement and as a fiduciary to First Nations.

"The NFA has not been honoured," Strong said at the recent Water and Indigenous Peoples conference in Montreal. "Instead, Canada along with Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro have spent the last 17 years

PHOTO BY ERNEST WEBB

minimizing and avoiding their obligations by saying that the words we all agreed to back in 1977 mean something different than what we thought. Their lawyers have hidden behind strict interpretations that have no bearing on the intent of the agreement. The parties have spent enormous energy, time and money on stalling, divide and conquer, and 'starve them out' tactics. Over the years the parties have made several attempts to buy out the agreement rather than implement it."

Later on, in an interview with *The Nation*, Strong said the Northern Flood Agreement forces the five Bands to pay for any new compensation claims out of their original settlement. "The damning thing about the Split Lake arrangement is the indemnity provisions that are contained in the agreement. Basically it assures Canada, Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro that whatever they pay out, Split Lake in this case would have to honour that pay-out. In other words if they paid out $15 million to other claimants, Split Lake would be obligated to pay Canada, Manitoba or Hydro $15 million from our settlement," he said.

Strong said the agreement's lump-sum compensation payments are not beneficial to the bands and are an easy street for Manitoba Hydro to take. The bands feel they are not being considered full partners in resource development on their lands.

Strong says that if he was put in a corner and if the government wanted a new deal, then the bands should receive monies every year the hydro-project is in place producing electricity. A "real" partnership would also include full and complete environmental-impact statements, as well as mitigation measures and a host of other issues. Mitigation planning would have to be done in advance of any project.

"I think that type of arrangement would be short and uncomplicated—easy to understand and the money would flow in perpetually as long as the project is there. This notion of negotiating complicated deals such as what the James Bay Agreement is all about, and what I expect will be the result of the signed agreement yesterday [the Inuit and Hydro-Quebec], are not necessarily in the best interests of the people who signed them. I'm talking about the indigenous people," he said.

"The governments and the Crown corporations are too massive. They've got a lot of human resources behind them. They are able to negotiate arrangements with hidden clauses, hidden meanings to words that they can use in the future to take away the rights that the people think they negotiated. The government is able to use the army of lawyers behind them to put the words in place that would be in their favour in the event of judicial challenges or judicial interpretations."

—William Nicholls

Alcan legacy still haunting Cheslatta

Though Alcan helped to fund the recent H_2O Water and Indigenous Peoples Conference in Montreal, there was no invitation for the Cheslatta people to attend. They showed up anyhow and plan to stage a protest at the April 25 Alcan annual stockholders' meeting.

The Cheslatta t'en Carrier First Nation of British Columbia is concerned over Alcan's proposed Kemano Completion Project. This project, called Kemano 2, will reduce water levels in the Nechako River by up to 87 per cent. This is expected to have an impact on the Fraser River and other water tributaries.

The impacts of this project could prove disastrous to fish, particularly salmon, which require certain conditions to migrate upriver and spawn. Already, white sturgeon are being considered for the endangered species list by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service because of present unregulated hydro-facilities. Environmental groups fear that Kemano 2 could lead to the white sturgeon's extinction.

The public hearings on this project are expected to be completed this spring. Construction will begin some time after that. The Carrier First Nations complain that federal employees are not allowed to speak out against the project and federal documents pertaining to the project are classified as confidential and are not available to the public. Also, the federal government exempted the project from a federal review in 1990. (In July 1993, the Conservative-dominated House of Commons endorsed a Senate-Commons report that criticized the Brian Mulroney's cabinet for acted illegally and unconstitutionally when it exempted Kemano 2 from review.)

There is no intervenor funding in the hearings and nobody is studying certain project impacts like fish and wildlife extinction. Like the Crees, the Cheslatta people are aware of the high levels of mercury in existing Alcan hydro reservoirs from the first project completed in the 1950s.

Alcan's first project in the area calls to mind painful memories for the Cheslatta people. George, an elder from the Cheslatta t'en First Nation remembers back in the 1950s as a youth not being allowed into the meetings that would change his life forever.

"Only the elders were allowed in. They didn't understand or know much about it," he told *The Nation* at the water conference in Montreal.

Most of the people were in the bush trapping and didn't even know about the hearings or negotiations. The Cheslatta people were given three weeks to negotiate a settlement, compared to the two years given to local non-native residents. Documents surrendering the land were forged in many cases, according to George and other Cheslatta.

Another surprise was waiting for George. After returning from trapping in the bush he came home to the reserve to find his belongings outside the burnt-out shell of what used to be his home. The best part of his possessions had been looted.

He says the home was burned down with government approval so he and other residents wouldn't be tempted to stay in the area. After hiding what was left in the bushes, George found a check waiting for him at the post office. It was his compensation check for $50.

A farmer took pity on George and put him to work on his farm. Eventually, with the farmer's help, George bought five acres to begin rebuilding his life.

The Cheslatta people's burial grounds were also flooded. Someone felt it was too difficult to move the cemeteries, and as a result of fluctuating water levels, coffins of loved ones began floating on the water. Today, a bishop has consecrated a nearby lake as a cemetery to help deal with these painful memories.

The Cheslatta t'en Carrier Nation asks for your help.

They ask you to think twice before buying Alcan products.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

Write letters protesting Kemano 2 to: Premier Michael Harcourt, Room 156, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4

Prime Minister Jean Chretien, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Contributions to the Cheslatta's Nation Defense Fund can be sent to: Cheslatta Carrier Nation, P.O. Box 909, Burns Lake, B.C. V0J 1E0.

WATER

"WATER IS MY LIFE STRUGGLE"

PHOTO BY ERNEST WEBB

"Water is my life struggle," says Phyllis Young, a Lakota woman from the Standing Rock reserve at Fort Yates, North Dakota.

Phyllis Young has been fighting for her tribe's water rights for the last 20 years. She remembers when she was 10 years old being removed from the Missouri River basin. That January, there were 190 homes in the area that would be flooded in an effort by the U.S. government to control flooding further downstream.

"There was an elder called Red Tomahawk. He was blind and, using his cane, went to a top of a hill. He was blind but he could hear the rush of the water. He started to sing the death song for our people. That's how he felt—that this meant death for our people. It was how they did it. There was no such thing as an environmental-impact statement in those days. They flooded thousands of acres of Indian lands," remembers Phyllis, who was in Montreal to attend the Water and Indigenous Peoples Conference. The cradle of the entire Missouri basin was flooded, she said.

"I never knew all the conditions of colonialism," remarked Phyllis. She soon learned about boarding schools and family members turned to alcoholism and welfare. The Lakotas were given $12 million compensation. About $7 million of that money was earmarked for "rehabilitation"—another name for assimilation because you got money if you were willing to move to a city and integrate into the mainstream life.

Thirty years later the government's back for more water development. Hearings were held in three cities in the Dakota states. The Lakota and United Sioux tribes went to all hearings in force with the same message: "You took these lands by force. There has not been just compensation. For you to take our water is genocide. You cannot do this to us."

People were shocked as they didn't realize that Indian lands had been taken. Congressional hearings resulted and a joint tribal advisory committee was set up to hear the tribes involved. The tribes asked for $365 million and Congress approved $100 million in 1992.

The U.S. negotiators came from the Army Corps of Engineers, which controlled the river systems and the hydroelectric dams. One of the top U.S. negotiators was a Colonel Jones. The Standing Rock Lakota were Sitting Bulls' Band and they were the ones who lead the charge against General Armstrong Custer. Colonel Jones apparently felt that these Indians were responsible for what happened to Custer and they weren't going to get anything. He was removed as being not objective.

The Lakotas' sacred Black Hills are under seige once again, but not just by the government. Homestake Mines, which runs the largest gold mine in the world in the area, would like to expand it into an open-pit mine. Homestake has contaminated the entire system of Spearfish Canyon. When ordered by the government to clean up its act, Homestake just milled the uranium trailings.

With Homestake's past record, the Lakota don't want a surface mine that would leave huge scars on the land. The Lakota people are fighting and hope that they will be as successful as they were against Union Carbide, which they have already stopped from coming into the Black Hills.

In 1984, the Lakotas joined with non-Indian ranchers in the area to form the Indians and Cowboys Alliance to prevent the building of a gunnery range in the Black Hills. Phyllis stressed that such alliances and environmental groups have been instrumental in preserving lands such as the Black Hills. She said the people who would see further development on Standing Rock lands take into account the traditional uses of the lands, not the dollars that are trying to buy you out.

BY WILL NICHOLLS

More coverage of the Water Conference on page 26.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS FROM THE ODEYAK TRIP

BY L. P. MASTY

Friday, April 8, 1994

Isaac Masty and John Petagumskum Jr. flew in from Whapmagoostui, Quebec. James Masty will be representing the Council of the Whapmagoostui First Nation. Ashley Iserhoff and me, Lisa Petagumskum Masty, will be representing the Youth.

The other paddlers are Rene Blacksmith and Claude Otter, the Grand Council Liaison Officer.

Saturday, April 9

Luis Eguren drove us from Montreal to the Albany area. We met Nancy Papish and were informed that we were to stay at her house. Almost immediately, we were also told that we had to go to a potluck supper put on especially for us.

At the supper, we were introduced to many people. We couldn't remember most of their names but those we had to remember were those who would be on the trip. Our guide on the river would be Roger Downs. Ashley Gilbert and her boyfriend, Jeremiah, would be driving the van while we were on the river. Wind Wolf would be assisting in any way that he could.

After the supper, we found out that the canoe rack didn't fit on the truck, a truck rented especially for the Odeyak. A minor problem, but a problem just the same.

Sunday, April 10

As a result of the problems with the rack, we had to drive rather than paddle to Kingston. At the marina we were welcomed by representatives from the Mayor's office and other officials. We were honoured with gifts of tobacco and medicine for the journey. There were many interested people who wanted to hear the Cree perspective on James Bay II, an issue they had become familiar with from their perspective. We spoke for the river, the land, the animals, the children and the elders. Teachings of respect for all creation, taught to us as children, were also shared.

Later, people came forward to thank us for being "real." We didn't know how to respond because we were only speaking about our reality. The reality of the proposed destruction of a virgin territory and disrespect for the people who live in that territory. Disrespect of values and beliefs kept alive for thousands of years.

We thanked them for their hard work and their perseverence. There were people there who had never seen the James Bay and Hudson Bay territory but yet they spend many hours volunteering to bring attention to our issue.

We were then driven to another potluck supper. There were many people who had gone out of their way to provide meat for the supper because they were told that the Crees like meat. Again, we were honoured with gifts and excellent entertainment. The entertainment consisted of local focksingers and a traditional Native American artist and her niece.

Manna Jo Greene and her husband put us up for the night. I had a room without curtains. From my bed I could see the stars and wondered who in James Bay was looking at these same stars. Whoever they were, I wished them well.

Before sunrise, I was awakened by the sound of an owl. Immediately, I thought about my Grandmother. The owl cried three times. As a child I was taught that the owl is a messenger of death or bad news or a change of weather.

Whatever had happened I could not change but I was thankful for being honoured to hear what came after the message of the owl. At first it sounded like one bird but then other birds joined in to make the most beautiful melodies. I was left to wonder again what took place during the night.

Monday, April 11

By late afternoon we learned that an elder had died in Mistissini. Everybody was very subdued. We paddle and were welcomed by quite a large crowd in Poughkeepsie. The Hudson River was quite scenic. When we docked, we were swarmed by little black children who wanted our autographs. Ashley and I taught them how to write their names in Cree Syllabics. Just being around them really made us feel good. They made everything okay.

One of the folksingers, Pat Humphries, gave us money from the sale of her tapes. We split the money to buy hotel rooms. We all wanted to be alone to deal with the news of the death of the elder. We spent this time thinking about those elders still alive, what they represented to us and to this journey.

Tuesday, April 12

The rain was coming down hard most of the day. We arrived early at our stop. There was nobody there to meet us. We waited for about a half-hour before people came by. There was yet again another potluck supper. Claude Otter, Rene Blacksmith, James Masty, John Petagumskum Jr., Ashley Iseroff and I made presentations. We spoke about the message of hope that we've been privileged to witness on the journey. We acknowledge all those who have taught us well and those who care so much.

Wednesday, April 13

The rain was still pouring and as a result it was decided that we would drive to New York City. Claude had to be driven to a radio interview. The rest of the group drove to NYC. We were all energetic and getting anxious to get there.

We eventually got there and were rudely surprised by NYC traffic. Everybody seemed to be in a rush. The drivers were

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

GRAND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

GCCQ

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ADMINISTRATION RÉGIONALE CRIE

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GRAND CHIEF OF CREE NATION HONOURED WITH INTERNATIONAL AWARD

"THE GOLDMAN ENVIRONMENTAL PRIZE"

On April 18, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come received the Goldman Award in San Francisco. He was one of six to be chosen this year for excellence in efforts to save the environment. The other winners came from Germany, St-Vincent (Caribbean), Egypt, Ecuador and Thailand. The six were selected by a panel of experts from more than 30 nations who reviewed nominations submitted by 19 internationally known environmental organizations. These include the World Wildlife Fund and the National Geographic Society.

On Thursday, Chief Coon Come met with Boutros-Boutros Ghali, Secretary General of the United Nations, and pressed the case for recognition of indigenous rights.

On Friday, April 22, the Grand Chief was recognized by the ABC television network as "Person of the Week," a distinction given to those who have made a significant contribution to world concerns.

"This recognition of the Cree efforts to save our lands from destructive mega-projects will help us all to save the Boutin, Little Whale, Coates, Great Whale, Nottaway, Rupert and Broadback rivers. This is recognition that we all can use to further our fight for the protection of Cree rights and our lands. We are strong when we work together," said Bill Namagoose, executive director of the Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec).

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

COMMUNICATING FROM HEART TO HEART

UNTITLED
BY ERIC ROBERTSON

A JOURNEY OF THE SPIRIT

PHOTO BY ERNEST WEBB

PHOTO BY ERNEST WEBB

Eric Robertson, a native student at Concordia, and some friends are hoping to organize monthly nights in Montreal where native artists can show their art, whatever form it may take.

This month they displayed paintings and artwork from various artists and students from the Montreal area. Next month, they plan to do something on hydroelectric dams. "We just want to encourage creativity," he says. "We want everyone to participate and learn. We want to include everyone."

Headlining this month's show, which was attended by a who's who of the Montreal native art scene, was Michelle Thrush, who grew up in Calgary, Alta. Her mom is Plains Cree and her dad is Iroquois from Ontario.

She started acting in film and TV when she was 17. She first got into the theatre a couple of years ago when she was cast for *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* in Vancouver. She didn't really get into acting as her main focus 'till she hit the theatre. The instant reaction from audiences was what did it for her. So at 21 she packed her bags and moved to Vancouver, got an agent and took it from there.

She wants social change. She thought of being a social worker but chose the theatre because it gives you "the ability to take something that you really believe in, interpret it and give it to someone else."

Her frustrations were written into her own play, *Reclaim*, three years ago. This is the play she performed in Montreal this month. "I grew up with the Band politics and it frustrated me."

"The spirit of those who call me Indian" is the name of her spirit as she makes the journey, which touches on issues like abuse of women. "Society has found a way of not responding to it. It almost becomes natural. It's not shocking anymore to see a woman abused, the little girl with the priest. I think that's where a lot of the dysfunctions are from, residential schools. And we're still carrying that around."

Touring the country in different communities with the play, she says the response she gets from people is happiness—"because it's a release for them."

When she did the play for a banquet of native and non-native businessmen, after the first monologue they were "harassing the technical director to stop the show. But by the end they did a standing ovation."

"Don't waste time" is the advice she wants to pass on to young people thinking of going into acting or any other field. "Go for it now and don't just think about it. Soon you'll be 30 and asking yourself, 'Where'd my life go? I was just thinking about it.'"

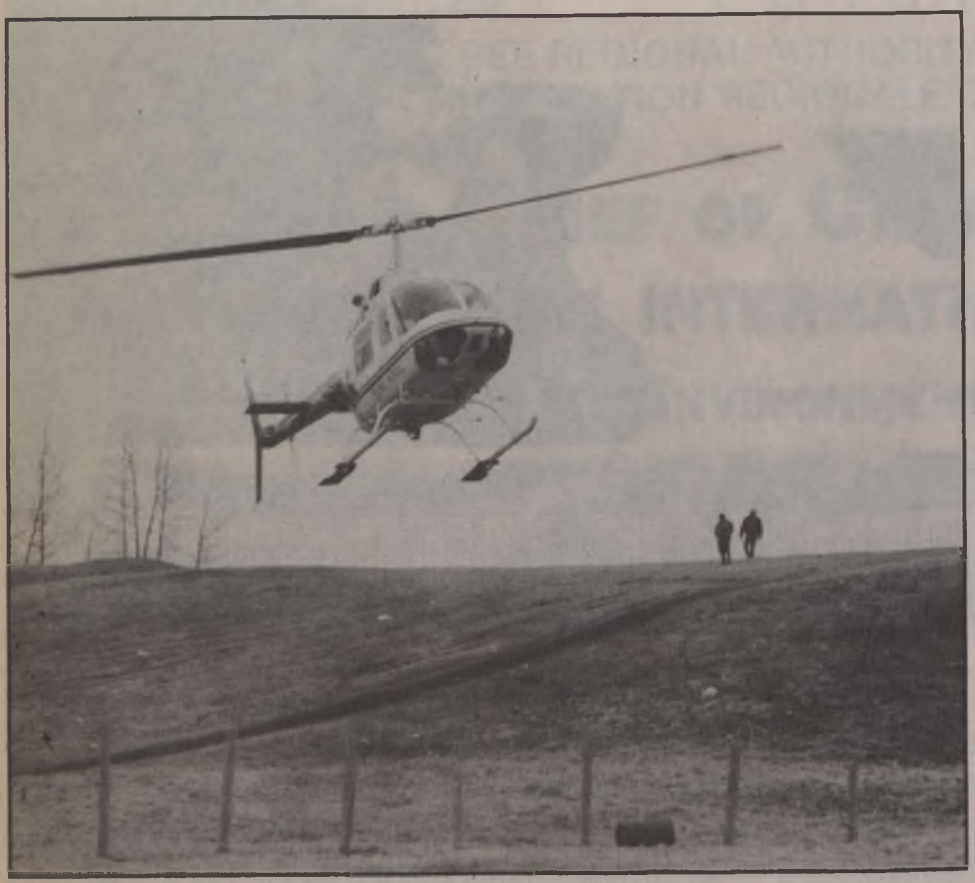
She plans to continue her tour and have workshops with kids and do the play for whatever community she's in.

BY ERNEST WEBB

AIM TRIES TWO OF ITS OWN IN A PUBLIC TRIBUNAL

AIM is not what it once was.

The feisty organization of Native Americans who took up arms at Wounded Knee is now caught up in internal strife and charges that one of its former leaders, Vernon Bellecourt, is a police informer.



BY ALEX ROSLIN

Members of the American Indian Movement held a public trial in California March 24-5. A jury of five found Clyde Bellecourt, one of the organization's founders, guilty of "subversion of AIM" and the "use, sale and/or distribution of drugs and alcohol to Indian people." His brother, Vernon, was found guilty of "subversion of AIM."

The two face further charges at another AIM tribunal in August, including the charge that Vernon is a police agent.

The conflict started in 1993, when Vernon and Clyde Bellecourt set up an organization known as "National-AIM" in Minneapolis.

The Bellecourts started proclaiming their group as the national office for AIM's many state chapters and proceeded to appoint national representatives across the country.

This surprised long-time activists in AIM's state chapters, who for years operated on a decentralized basis and had never met to appoint a national office.

Russell Means, AIM's state executive director in Colorado, told *The Nation* that the Bellecourts also started trying to undermine some of AIM's most outspoken activists.

"The grossest part was that, for reasons that were initially unfathomable, they began attacking AIM chapters and leaders who were very effective," he said in a phone interview from California.

The person who bore the brunt of their attacks was Ward Churchill, a native-studies professor at Colorado University and co-director of AIM's Colorado chapter who has written numerous books and articles about Native American oppression. The Bellecourts started suggesting that Churchill is really a white man because he isn't enrolled on any official band council list. This has now become a big debate in the U.S., and publications like *Indian Country Today* have devoted entire articles to whether Churchill is really native.

Means said Churchill can trace his ancestry back to the immigrant roles of the Cherokee Nation in 1815. "I can't trace my own ancestry to 1815," Means said. "The Bellecourts are themselves one-eight Indian and then they go around pointing fingers at others."

The activities of the Bellecourts led some AIM members to start asking questions. "What we couldn't figure out was why they were doing this," said Means. "We started doing some research into AIM history and we found out that every time there was dissension in AIM, Vernon Bellecourt was in the middle of it."

Means said suspicions were further raised when National-AIM appointed a known police informer as the group's representative in Virginia and Maryland.

Leading AIM members started probing the past of the Bellecourt brothers, and even searched out testimony from their own people, the Ojibway. They found a pattern of irresponsible behaviour that was so pervasive, they started thinking Vernon Bellecourt was a police agent.

Twelve AIM chapters finally met last December to draw up an indictment against the brothers.

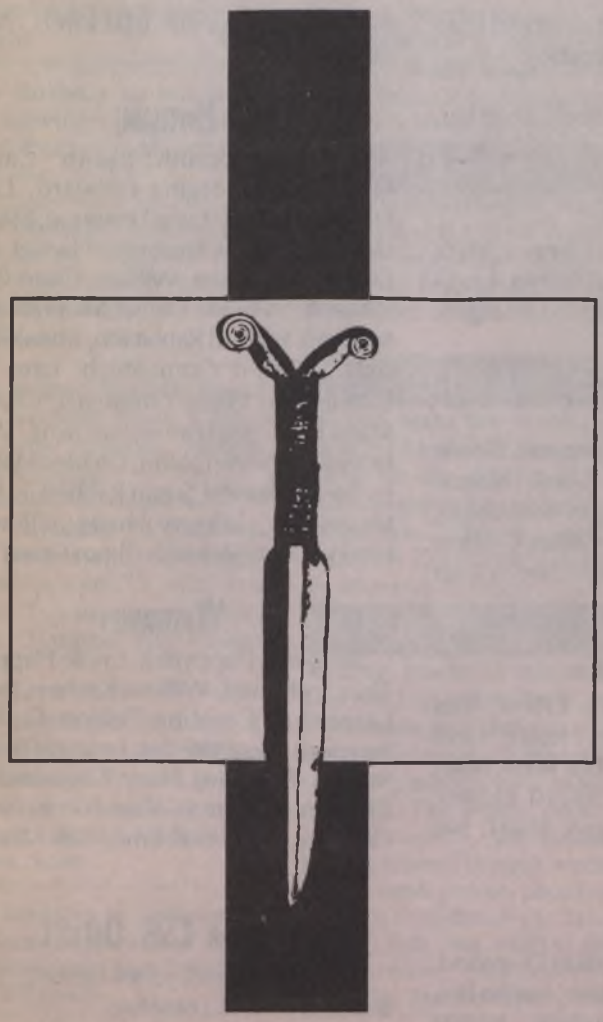
"Based on the evidence we have, we feel we can prove that Vernon Bellecourt is an agent," said Means, who is the chief prosecutor in both trials.

The police-informant charge will be dealt with in the second part of the trial, planned for August in Minneapolis. The verdicts are being decided by a five-person jury including three non-AIM members, one of them a Cree lawyer from Edmonton, Sharon Venne.

The issue in the trials, says Means, is the sovereignty of each state AIM chapter, and of native peoples in general. "We want the Indian world to understand that sovereignty is the issue. The lack of respect of another Indian's sovereignty is unconscionable."

SM-3 "UNACCEPTABLE" TO INNU DISSIDENT SYLVESTRE ROCK

Sylvestre Rock spent a week in jail and lost his job because of his opposition to the Sainte-Marguerite-3 project. And he's not giving up now.



Innu leaders agreed in mid-April not to try to delay construction of the SM-3 hydroelectric project in exchange for $66 million over 50 years ($21 million in today's dollars). The Innu will also be allowed to bid for construction contracts worth $10 million.

But Rock says nothing can compensate for the lands that will be lost to the flooding. "We won't be able to do traditional activities, hunting and fishing. It will damage our territory. There will be mercury," he said in a phone interview from his home in the Innu community of Washap-Maliotenam, near Sept-Iles on the North Shore of the St-Lawrence.

Washap-Maliotenam, a community of 1,300, sits at the mouth of the Moisie River, which would see its flow drastically reduced when two tributaries are diverted into the Ste-Marguerite River.

"We aren't against development," he said. "But it has to be sane development."

Rock said the chief of his community, who supports the SM-3 project, isn't listening to his people, most of whom oppose the project.

"This agreement is unacceptable because the population is against SM-3 and the chief signed it anyway."

"This agreement is unacceptable because the population is against SM-3 and the chief signed it anyway."

He said the chief is "laughing at the people" and is running a "dictatorship."

Rock said opponents of the project face reprisals from the chief, including losing their jobs.

Rock used to work for the band council in the public relations department, but lost his job in 1992 after he helped form the Coalition For Nitassinan, which is leading the protest against SM-3. Rock has also spent a week in jail for taking part in an occupation of a band building in 1992.

The Coalition For Nitassinan is planning to step up its protest campaign to stop construction of the project, scheduled to start this month. An anti-SM-3 demonstration was held in Montreal on April 23. Among those in attendance was Gilbert Pilot, the coalition's official spokesman.

The SM-3 project was heavily criticized in Quebec-run public hearings, but was still given the green light by Premier Daniel Johnson as part of his plan to create jobs.

SM-3 is expected to create 900 jobs and to cost $1.2 billion—at a pricetag of $1.3 million per job.

Rock said some members of the band council are in positions of conflict-of-interest and actually stand to gain from the SM-3 project.

One of the Innu-owned companies that is poised to get a contract for construction on the SM-3 project is Ti-Tony Excavation, which is owned by Richard Fontaine, the son of band councillor Paul-Emile Fontaine.

BY ALEX ROSLIN

Cree School Board Special Recognition Awards

Whapmagostui

Luc Beaule, Phyllis Masty, Isaac Rupert, John Masty, Vera George, Emile Lebel, Joseph Masty, Mary Sandy, Sophie Stem, Stella Masty-George

Chisasibi

Annie Bearskin-Gates, William MacNeil, Susan Runnels, Therese Roy, Eliza Webb, James Laird, Caroline Bobbish, Beulah Sam-Cox, Elsie House, Matthew Ratt, Helen Serafinowicz, Elsie Duff, Mary McKee, Annie Herodier, Victor Louttit, Billy Kitty, Billy Rupert, Samson Shem, George Matches, Noah Snowboy, Simon Bobbish, Daniel Napash, George Visitor, Victor Rupert, David Sam, Juliet Cookish, Nellie D. Lameboy, Lynn Shalit, Debbie Cox, Nellie Pachanos, Daisy Herodier, Charles Bobbish, Nancy Bobbish, Marianne Pashagumskum, Rena Picard, Jacqueline Lameboy, Alice Labbe, Denise Dankwa, Doris Pachanos, Elizabeth Chiskamish, Kenneth Rabbitskin, Lillian Rabbitskin, Albert Boota, Beverly Priest, David Pepabano, Margaret Bearskin, Samuel Bearskin, Agnes Shem, Elijah Cox, Marie-Louise Chakapash, Martha Bearskin, Eddie Pash, Sarah Ratt, Winnifred Sam, Elizabeth Bearskin, Daisy Matches, Emmet Nolan, Jacqueline Kitty, Maudie Pisiniquan, Terry Gates, Connie Cox, Rose Sam Langer, Louis Boudreau, Alan Langer, Marc Paquet, Lucy Shem, Lucy Salt, Connie Lameboy, Elsie Pepabano, Stella House-Lameboy

PLUS: Gracie Orr, Hannah Bearskin, Josie Sam Atkinson

Wemindji

Daniel Atsynia, Linda O'Connor, Myra Natawapineskum, Norman Gilpin, Linda Visitor, Mary Anne Gilpin, Ida Gilpin, Frances Visitor

Eastmain

Fred Tomatuk, Gloria Tomatuk, Florrie Mark-Stewart, Marjorie Mark, Florrie Mayappo, Beatrice Gilpin-Mayappo, Margaret Cheezo, Minnie Gilpin, Gordon Gilpin, Dorothy Gilpin, David Cheezo, John Weapenicappo

Waskaganish

Donna Cheezo, Annie Erless, Rita Hester-MacLeod, Dondus Hester, Gerti Murdoch, Ruth Salt, Ethel Blackned, Mary Bear, Evelyn Munroe, Clifford Hester, Annie Whiskeychan, Daisy Moar, Joe MacNeil

Nemaska

Kristy Mettaweskum, Lillian Diamond, Edith Matoush, Danie Dostaler, Metha Bos, Sophia Tanoush-Wapachee, Bessie Blackned, Charlie Blackned, Nellie Coonishish

Mistissini

Anna Blacksmith, Judith Campey MacLeod, Georgina Forward, Lousie Frechette, Marie-Lyne Levesque, Margaret Linton, Annie Ottereyes, Harriet Coon Come, Isaac Loon, William Coon Come, Elizabeth Matoush, Harriet Matoush, Sandy Matoush, Edward Rabbitskin, Ronnie Blacksmith, Alfred Coonishish, Late Isaac Coonishish, Willie Ottereyes, Charlotte MacLeod, Matthew Iserhoff, Annie Iserhoff, Beverly Quinn, Charles Matoush, Louise Blacksmith, Susan Rabbitskin, Nancy Mianscum, Johnny Husky, Charlotte Husky, Coon Matoush, Bjorn Olsen

Waswanipi

Abraham Happyjack, Cecile Happyjack, Flora Icebound, William Kitchen, Jacques Larouche, Caroline Polson-Gull, Ella Neeposh, Guy Mercier, Laurette Bessette, Marcel Bessette, Mary Diamond-Gull, Charlotte Latour, Pauline Fortin, Gemma Gauthier, James Gull, Emily Gull-Mianscum

Other CSB Offices

Jean Trembath, Juliet Iserhoff, Carole Bates, Clarence Tomatuk

Classifieds

100-Births

Congratulations to... Reuben Wapachee and Sherry-Ann Louitt on the birth of daughter Sequinn-Angie-on March 30, 94-"Love": Charlotte & Abel

101-Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to my dad Bazile Diamond on May 9 love Al Waysannette. xoxoxo

Happy Birthday to our lovely daughter Sylvanna Theresa Weistchee, 9 years old, on April 30. From your parents Jim & Beatrice Weistchee. We love you so much.

Happy Birthday to son James Jolly who will be 12 years old on April 20, from mom Marion with all my love.

Happy Birthday to our grandmother Helen Mianscum from Ouje-Bougoumou on April 28, with lots of love, Renee and Amlia Dixon

Happy belated birthday Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. From Bella, Chantal, Patrick, Nelson & Kenny.

Happy birthday to Jonathan "Boss" Bosum who will be nine years old on April 23. With lots of love, Tommy, mom Rosie, Melissa, Matthew and Ashley. xoxox

To a wonderful mother & Grandma who lives in Val d'Or, happy birthday! We will always love you! From Norman, Suzanne, Ryan, Michael & Brandon. xoxo...

Happy birthday to our Grandpa Billy Diamond on May 17, with lots of love from grandchildren Twyla & Terrell

Happy 5th birthday to Twyla Diamond from Waskaganish on May 16, with lots of love from the Shecapio family.

Happy birthday to: Jeannie Mianscum May 3. From your Ouje-Bougoumou healing centre buddies.

Happy birthday to Kenny Mianscum May 10, Jeannie Mianscum May 3, Jerry Bosum May 20, with love. From Henry, Margo, Dion & Nicole Cooper, Ouje-Bougoumou.

Happy Birthday to: Jerry Bosum may 20, Varley Mianscum May 11, with love from Hattie Mianscum, Blake Mina Olivia Bosum

Happy Birthday to Vanessa Otter April 22. From Wemindji, Quebec. Love Flora and Jerry.

Happy Birthday to John Mianscum May 17, Minnie Sharl May 17, Kenny Mianscum May 10. From Ouje-Bougoumou with love Hattie & Olivia.

103-Anniversaries

Happy Anniversary to our parents Samuel & Florrie Shecapio, from Waskaganish on May 3, with love from children Alice, Eric, Valerie, Randy, Clark & Marlene.

200-For Sale

Do you want the latest news from the Mohawk Nation? Subscribe to the *Eastern Door*, a twice-monthly newspaper from Kahnawake. One-yr subscription: $39. P.O.B. 326, Kahnawake, Mohawk Territory, J0L 1B0

300-Personals

Seeking beautiful native lesbian (or lesbian inclined), who is feminine and knows it. Over 30, professional, independent, sense of humour, with or without kids. I'm 40ish, attractive (knock out!!!), professional, known to bend straight women. Please send recent photo and reply in confidence to "Lonely Heart", P.O. Box 48036, 5678 Park Avenue, Montreal, P.Q., H2V 4S8. Serious replies only.

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NEWS

Odeyak Trip takes Crees to NYC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

weaving in and out very fast. Some of the crew stayed at Gretchen Hugh's place and we stayed at Alicia Fierer's. Wind Wolf was our personal tour guide. He was quite informative.

Sunday, April 17

Earth Day Celebrations! The wind was very strong. Due to fear of tipping over we didn't paddle. We went to the Celebration. We were on stage and had a few minutes to bring our message of thanks to the people of NYC for their interest and hard work.

After the celebration, we drove to Montreal. We got there late. There were messages waiting for us. Not a good sign. I returned a message from my father. He told me that my husband's grandmother had died. I understood the message of the owl then.

I just hope the rest of the world can understand the message to end the desecration of traditional and sacred lands for monetary profit. What we do to the circle of life, we do it to ourselves and our children. This practice must stop now. We will be silent no more! Adios until the next trip!

Present, Monday, April 25, 12:30 a.m.

I am at the hotel room trying to finish this piece. I am almost done when Stanley George calls. He tells me that his mom wants batteries and he talks about the latest in Whapmagoostui. He tells me that an Inuit elder died today. She was to be flown to Val d'Or but didn't make it.

I am almost relieved but I still feel the pain of the loss of another elder. I am almost relieved because I think about my grandmother, Lottie Petagumskum. She has been sick for a long time. Before the Odeyak trip started, I went to see her at the Montreal General. I asked her for permission to go. The doctors were not very optimistic, and I felt I needed her to tell me it was okay to go. She lay there like a baby. I could hardly make out her words. She gestured for me to approach her, she kissed me and then I just let the tears flow.

I cried because I didn't know if I would see her again. I wondered if it was worth it to sacrifice the time I had left with her. She told me she was ready to leave, but first she wanted to see her children and grandchildren. She told me to have a safe trip and to do her proud.

I realize now that the third owl was the message of a death of another elder. The melody of the birds was the eternal peace they would find and they would not feel any more pain.

My grandmother is home now. She has achieved what every elder wants to do. She taught me the importance of our traditional values and transferred to me the love of the Cree way of life and all that it entails. She also instilled in me a determined and stubborn refusal to allow the destruction of the territory she so loved. I know now I will always walk with her teachings and will always be thankful to the Creator for giving me such a wise woman as my grandmother.

The trip was dedicated to all elders, both those who walk this world and the spiritual world. Their guidance we must rely on. Their love we must practice. Their way of life we must protect. For it is the Cree way.

Wachiya.

WATER

Sami stand up for their rights

The Sami people are natives of the European continent. For thousands of years they have harvested the reindeer, keeping their traditional lifestyles in the face of opposition from neighbours who saw them as outdated.

Today, the Sami people still herd reindeer in northern Scandinavia. They have felt the effects of civilization in the form of dams blocking their traditional migratory routes. More recently they have had to deal with the effects of Chornobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine on reindeer populations. The effects of radiation fallout have made the Sami people fully aware of the vulnerability of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic environments.

To deal with the issues of today, the Sami have educated themselves and set up the Sami Institute. Bard Berg is a researcher at the institute looking for answers to Sami concerns. "We, the Sami people, have struggled for our land for a long time, and we have seen that, although it is difficult, it is not impossible to win this struggle," said Bard.

Owning your own reindeer or herding is a custom only started 400 years ago as a result of the depletion of wild reindeer stocks. But the Sami have always had reindeer for milk, food, transportation and other purposes, according to Bard.

Close contact with the Norwegians and Swedes led to an attempt to assimilate the Sami people into mainstream European society.

But the Sami relationship with southerners is better today than they were, say, 30 years ago, said Bard. "It's much like the situation in the United States and Canada. It's easier today than it was some years ago," he remarked.

It was not until 1961 that the Sami and their reindeer received protective status under The Water Act. The Sami people now receive legal assistance from the state, but they still face a system in which Sami interests are defended by a state lawyer against state interests in a state court.

Development has seen the Sami being forced to move out of traditional reindeer herding grounds. To protest their way of life, the Sami have sought alliances with other peoples like the Inuit and environments. As a minority, they actively sought out these alliances and consider them of prime importance. "It is important for native peoples to support each other through all available channels and in every possible way," said Bard.

These alliances has succeeded in saving large areas from dam construction through the formation of national parks. Often, projects that go through are reduced in size.

The last 10 years have seen the development of Sami Parliaments in Finland, Sweden and Norway. These bodies have some self-government powers, like education and culture. The Sami are currently negotiating to attain more self- determination.

Said Bard, "In the years when we were suppressed, the language and the culture survived. Today, we are happy they survived."

—by Will Nichols

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